

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

124
NO.

October 18, 1961

FROM : Amembassy ASUNCION

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF : Embassy despatch 41, August 18, 1961

OCT 20 1961

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|----|-----|---|---|----|-----|--|
| 19 For Dept. Use Only | ACTION ARR-4 | INFO | DEPT | RM/R | REP | AF | ARA | EUR | GE | NEA | CU | INR | E | P | IO | ICA | |
| | | | AGR | COM | FRB | INT | LAB | TAR | TR | XMB | | | | | | | |
| | | | AIR | ARMY | CIA | NAVY | OSD | OCB | USIA | NSA | | | | | | | |
| REC'D 10-24 | | | OTHER | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SUBJECT: Treaty between Paraguay and Argentina establishing Boundary in Area of the Pilcomayo River

As will be recalled from the despatch under reference, a local informant had indicated that the tendency of the Esteros-General Delgado portion of the Pilcomayo River to shift its bed had been a recent cause of irritation between Paraguayan and Argentine military contingents and might well cause future boundary tensions between the two countries.

The foregoing report, however, should be considered in conjunction with the enclosed memorandum concerning the existence of a treaty between the two countries which makes the Argentine-Paraguayan boundary independent of the river bed in the area where the Pilcomayo is inclined to shift its course.

For the Ambassador:

Julian L. Nugent
Julian L. Nugent
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure: *aid*

- 1) Memorandum re Argentine-Paraguayan boundary treaty.

Copies to:

- Paraguayan desk officer, ARA/EST
United States Embassy, Buenos Aires

DCM:JLNugent:cw

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FORM 6-61 FS-439 GPO 912596

For Department Use Only - To be Filled In on Yellow Original ONLY

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|--|
| ACTION ASSIGNED TO: | | ACTION TAKEN | |
| NAME OF OFFICER | DATE OF ACTION | DIRECTIONS TO RM/R | |
| OFFICE SYMBOL | | | |

TREATY BETWEEN PARAGUAY AND ARGENTINA ESTABLISHING
BOUNDARY IN THE AREA OF THE PILCOMAYO RIVER

The subject treaty was signed in Buenos Aires on June 1, 1945, and a text of it is now available in the Embassy Library.

The purpose of the treaty is to establish a definitive Paraguay-Argentine boundary in the region of the Pilcomayo River between Horqueta and Salto Palmar. It does so without making any reference to the bed of the river and describes the boundary in terms of geographical coordinates. Attached to the original treaty is a map with the boundary points indicated in red ink.

Thus, although the Pilcomayo is known as the "wandering river" in the boundary area covered by the treaty, changes in the course of the river have no effect upon the boundary itself.

It may be useful to the Embassy to know of the existence of this treaty, since many Paraguayans, including those in fairly high official positions, are apparently unaware of it and, consequently, believe that the Pilcomayo River marks the boundary between Paraguay and Argentina through its entire length.

Lack of such knowledge probably encouraged the story reported in Embdes 41 of August 18, 1961, regarding a recent clash between Argentines and Paraguayans caused by a change in the river's course in this region, together with the report that the Argentines had built a small dam to help the river change its course toward the north. The latter device seems to be an old tactic, however, since a publication issued in 1938 (seven years before a definitive boundary was established by treaty) records information given by a deserter from the Argentine army to the effect that the Argentine Fourth Engineers, under the command of Captain Aníbal Montes, had built a dam for the purpose of encouraging the river to flow a more northerly course in this same region.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY